

USSN 10/077,574
Amendment Responsive to Office Action of December 15, 2003
March 15, 2004
A-1756

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, and 5 are amended, claims 2 and 15-32 are canceled, and new claims 33-34 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-14, and 33-34 are pending.

Initially, Applicant hereby confirms the election made orally by the undersigned on December 4, 2003, of the Group I invention (claims 1-14). Accordingly, withdrawn non-elected claims 15-32 have been canceled, pending their re-introduction in an upcoming divisional application.

Applicant also wishes to thank Examiner Pantuck for his thorough examination of the subject application, and his indication that claims 6-14 are allowed, and that claims 2, 3, and 5 are objected to, and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Although Applicant disagrees with the rejections of claims 1 and 4 based upon prior art, the claims have been amended to accept the indicated allowed claims in order to expedite issuance of a patent, and the rejected claims will be re-introduced in a continuation application.

Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of allowable claim 2, which claim has been canceled, and is therefore allowable, together with dependent claims 3-5. Claim 3 has been amended to depend upon claim 1, rather than now canceled claim 2. Claim 5 has been amended to address the objection raised by the Examiner.

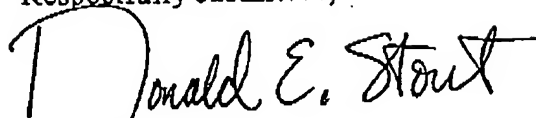
Additionally, new independent claim 33 has been introduced, which comprises original claim 5 rewritten in independent form. New claim 34, similar in scope to original claim 4, is allowable, since it is dependent upon claim 33.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the pending claims are allowable over the prior art of record, and an early notification of allowance is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the number below, should any further questions or issues need to be

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resolved.

Respectfully submitted,



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